

UCLA Faculty Association

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Saturday, November 8, 2025

Coming Soon to Berkeley

From [CalMatters](#): Two months after conservative advocate Charlie Kirk's assassination during a tour stop at a Utah university, his organization, Turning Point USA, will conclude its "American Comeback Tour" at UC Berkeley on Nov. 10 with heightened security. Turning Point USA is a nonprofit organization that seeks to promote conservative values on high school and college campuses. It was co-founded by Kirk and his late mentor, Bill Montgomery, in 2012. The Berkeley stop will be Turning Point USA's first event at a California college campus since Kirk was fatally shot on Sept. 10. Kirk's killing has intensified concerns about political violence and renewed debate over how universities balance security and free speech...



The Berkeley event will feature comedian and actor Rob Schneider and Christian apologist speaker Frank Turek at Zellerbach Hall. Both Turek and Schneider were friends of the late conservative activist, with Turek being a longtime mentor to Kirk and present when he was assassinated. Dan Mogulof, a UC Berkeley spokesperson, said, as of Oct. 14, the Berkeley chapter expected 300 attendees, though the hall has a capacity of nearly 2,000. The chapter has not responded to requests for the number of people registered for the event...

Full story at <https://calmatters.org/education/2025/11/uc-berkeley-turning-point-charlie-kirk/>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: [academic freedom](#), [politics](#), [UC-Berkeley](#)

Straws in the Wind - Part 155

From the [Wall St. Journal](#): At first, the idea of skipping college to take a fellowship for Palantir Technologies seemed preposterous to Matteo Zanini. But he couldn't stop thinking about it. "College is broken," one Palantir post said. "Admissions are based on flawed criteria. Meritocracy and excellence are no longer the pursuits of educational institutions," it said. The fellowship offered a path for high-school students to work full time at the company. After deciding to apply, Zanini found out he got the fellowship at around the same time he learned of his admission to Brown University. Brown wouldn't allow him to defer and he had also landed a full-ride scholarship through the Department of Defense.



"No one said to do the fellowship," said Zanini, who turned 18 in September. "All of my friends, my teachers, my college counselor, it was a unanimous no." His parents left the decision to him, and he decided to go with Palantir. Zanini is one of more than 500 high-school graduates who applied for Palantir's "Meritocracy Fellowship"—an experiment launched under Palantir CEO Alex Karp's thesis that existing American universities are no longer reliable or necessary for training good workers. Some fellows applied because college wasn't interesting to them. Others applied after getting rejected from target schools.

Palantir is a data-analytics company that has become known lately for its government contracts, including with the U.S. military and intelligence agencies. Its work with immigration enforcement authorities and in other arenas has drawn criticism, but Karp and other executives have leaned into a pro-America ethos. The company also has many commercial clients.

... "It's been a source of conflict between me and my parents," said Zanini. His mother was under the impression that he would do the fellowship as a gap year, and then reapply to return to college. But if he gets a full-time offer, that might no longer be the case...

Full story at <https://www.wsj.com/business/palantir-thinks-college-might-be-a-waste-so-its-hiring-high-school-grads-aed267d5>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

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Two Suits Settled



As blog readers will know, we often use the services of the Internet Archive to preserve recordings of Regents meetings and for other purposes. Many people use the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine to locate web sources that no longer currently exist. The Internet Archive

was threatened by two lawsuits dealing with its library lending practices of books and its preservation of 78 rpm recordings.*

We now have assurance from the Archive that it has survived settlements of the two lawsuits. From [Ars Technica](#):

Last month, the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine archived its trillionth webpage, and the nonprofit invited its more than 1,200 library partners and 800,000 daily users to join a celebration of the moment. To honor "three decades of safeguarding the world's online heritage," the city of San Francisco declared October 22 to be "Internet Archive Day." The Archive was also recently designated a federal depository library by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.), who proclaimed the organization a "perfect fit" to expand "access to federal government publications amid an increasingly digital landscape."

The Internet Archive might sound like a thriving organization, but it only recently emerged from years of bruising copyright battles that threatened to bankrupt the beloved library project. In the end, the fight led to more than 500,000 books being removed from the Archive's "Open Library."

"We survived," Internet Archive founder Brewster Kahle told Ars. "But it wiped out the Library."

An Internet Archive spokesperson confirmed to Ars that the archive currently faces no major lawsuits and no active threats to its collections. Kahle thinks "the world became stupider" when the Open Library was gutted—but he's moving forward with new ideas...

Full story at <https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2025/11/the-internet-archive-survived-major-copyright-losses-whats-next/>.

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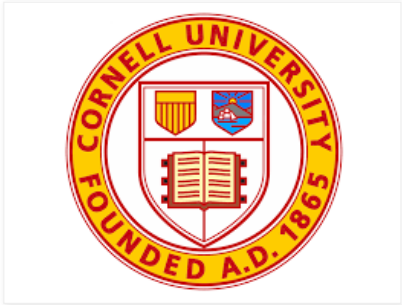
*<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/09/one-suit-settled.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:10 AM](#) No comments:

Friday, November 7, 2025

Cornell Deal

From the [Cornell Daily Sun](#): *The University reached a settlement* with the federal government to restore over \$250 million in federal funds, according to a statement sent by President Michael Kotlikoff to the University community on Friday. Cornell has agreed to give \$30 million to the federal government and invest an additional \$30 million into research to strengthen U.S. agriculture over the next three years. The settlement stipulates that all funding to Cornell will be restored for grants that were paused and those that were yet to be funded. Grants that were previously deemed ineligible for funding will also be restored in full.*



The federal government also agreed to close all ongoing Civil Rights Title VI investigations into Cornell. The University does not admit to any wrongdoing and "expressly denies liability with respect to the subject matter of the Investigations," according to the settlement. Under the agreement, the University must provide the federal government with anonymized undergraduate admissions data, including race, grade point average and standardized test scores broken down by specific colleges on a quarterly basis in compliance with existing regulations. The data will be subjected to a "comprehensive audit by the United States." However, the information will be "maintained confidentially and exempt from public disclosure," according to the agreement.

The settlement states that "no provision of this Agreement, individually or taken together, shall be construed as giving the United States authority to dictate the content of academic speech or curricula." However, Cornell agreed to include the Department of Justice's "Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination," released on July 29, as a training resource for all faculty and staff. The memo announcing the guidance says, "The federal government will not stand by while recipients of federal funds engage in discrimination," noting the "significant legal risk of initiatives" such as diversity, equity and inclusion programs and the allowance of transgender athletes to compete on women's teams...

Full story at <https://www.cornellsun.com/article/2025/11/cornell-reaches-settlement-with-trump-administration-to-restore-federal-funding>.

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*<https://ia800402.us.archive.org/9/items/2-final-hjaa-report.-the-soil-beneath-the-encampments/Cornell-settlement-agreement%2011-7-2025.pdf>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [1:37 PM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [Cornell](#), [diversity](#), [politics](#), [public funding](#)

Angry Judge



From the [NY Times](#): *A federal judge on Thursday excoriated the Trump administration's blitz of hardball tactics against elite universities, warning that the government's threats and investigations were undermining academic freedom at the University of California. Judge Rita F. Lin, of the Federal District Court in San Francisco, did not immediately order the government to curb its pressure campaign*

against the university system. But it was only minutes into a hearing on Thursday before Judge Lin, her voice crackling with anger, began depicting the Trump administration's methods as potentially lawless and deeply detrimental.

...What was emerging, she said, is "a classic, predictable First Amendment injury, and it's exactly what the administration has said that it intends." The White House did not immediately comment on Thursday.

...Thursday's hearing focused on a request for Judge Lin to issue a preliminary injunction. Although the judge, an appointee of former President Joseph R. Biden Jr., said that she did not expect to rule until at least late next week, a barrage of sharp questions suggested that she was immensely skeptical of the government's approach to schools like the University of California.

...The university system itself did not join [this] case that was before Judge Lin on Thursday. But system leaders have spent months in talks with the government about a possible settlement. The system has said little about those negotiations, and it tried unsuccessfully to keep the Trump administration's U.C.L.A. settlement proposal out of view, fighting a public records lawsuit all the way to the California Supreme Court...

Full story <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/11/06/us/trump-pressure-free-speech-university-of-california-lawsuit.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [academic freedom](#), [politics](#), [public funding](#), [UC](#)

Straws in the Wind - Part 154

From the [Williams Record](#): *The [Williams College] faculty approved a series of motions to remove language from the faculty handbook about the use of race in College's decision-making on hiring and admissions at the Oct. 7 faculty meeting. At last month's meeting, the faculty declined to pass the amendments and deferred them to this month for more substantive deliberation. The revisions are part of a broader effort to ensure the College's compliance with current federal laws and policies in order to recertify as a recipient of new federal research funding, President Maud S. Mandel told the Record in September. The recertification process was halted in May because of new federal guidelines targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts.*



Seven motions pertaining to the handbook, which outlines College governance and faculty employment, were approved at the meeting. Two of them removed references to affirmative action and rewrote the relevant section to focus on "non-discrimination." Another motion struck language that oriented the Bolin Fellowship toward underrepresented groups, and another removed racial provisions from the description of the faculty hiring process. The other three motions contained minor updates or were unrelated to DEI. Discussion at the meeting was muted and the changes were widely approved. The motion about the Bolin Fellowship, which passed by the narrowest margin, passed in an 81-15 vote with seven abstentions...

Full story at <https://williamsrecord.com/470677/news/faculty-votes-to-alter-handbook-remove-dei-references/>.

From the [Daily Bruin](#): *A national free speech advocacy group alleged that segments of the UC's online anti-harassment training restrict students' speech. The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression said it is concerned about a part of the mandatory training that says deadnaming – intentionally calling a transgender person by the name they used prior to their transition, as opposed to their lived name – "may" be considered a form of sexual harassment," in an Oct. 31 post on X. The group called for the UC to "clarify that dead-naming or using the wrong pronouns can only be punished if they are a part of a larger pattern of harassment," in a threaded reply on X.*

Students across the UC system are required to take the Sexual Violence and Harassment, Anti-Discrimination, Prevention and Education training annually. Students who do not complete the training can see their accounts placed on hold, which prevents them from enrolling in classes or

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accessing recreational campus facilities. UCLA Media Relations referred the Daily Bruin to the UC Office of the President for comment. Rachel Zaentz, a UCOP spokesperson, said in an emailed statement that the UC created the SHAPE training to comply with California requirements...

Full story at <https://dailybruin.com/2025/11/03/free-speech-group-alleges-shape-training-restricts-uc-students-speech>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [diversity](#), [politics](#), [UC](#), [UCLA](#), [UCOP](#), [Williams College](#)

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 86



From the [Harvard Crimson](#): *Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences is running an estimated structural deficit of approximately \$350 million, a major shortfall that will require a dramatic reworking of its budget, FAS Dean Hopi E. Hoekstra announced in an email to affiliates... The projected deficit, which is equivalent to roughly 20 percent of the school's annual operating budget, reflects the recent increase in the federal endowment tax and a rise in long-term operating costs. The figure does not account for uncertainty about the future of federal funding, including potential decreases in federal agency budgets, the number of new grants, and lower reimbursement rates for indirect research costs.*

...The projections come months into an extensive cost-cutting effort at the FAS. The school paused non-essential capital projects, drastically reduced its Ph.D. admission numbers, halted staff hiring, and kept its budget flat for this year amid growing concerns about how the Trump administration's policies would tighten the school's budget.

The \$350 million estimate was produced by the Faculty Resources Committee, a group that advised the FAS on navigating the 2008 financial crisis and which Hoekstra reconvened in the spring...

Full story at <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/11/5/fas-structural-deficit/>.

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